

**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# National Veterans Outreach

Update to VA Showcase

January 29, 2014

Mr. Joe Curtin



# Agenda

- **Goals and Vision**
- **Mission**
- **Specified Tasks**
- **Outreach Goals and Objectives**
- **Digital Media Engagement**
- **Ad Council**
- **National Veterans Sports Programs and Special Events**
- **Tribal Government Relations**



How do you quickly move the needle, deliver on the President's, SECVA's goals and ultimately help veterans?

## President's Goals

**We also owe our veterans the care they were promised and the benefits that they have earned.** We have a sacred trust with those who wear the uniform of the United States of America. ...Too many wounded warriors go without the care that they need. Too many veterans don't receive the support that they've earned.

*- President Barack Obama, March 19, 2009*



## VA Goals

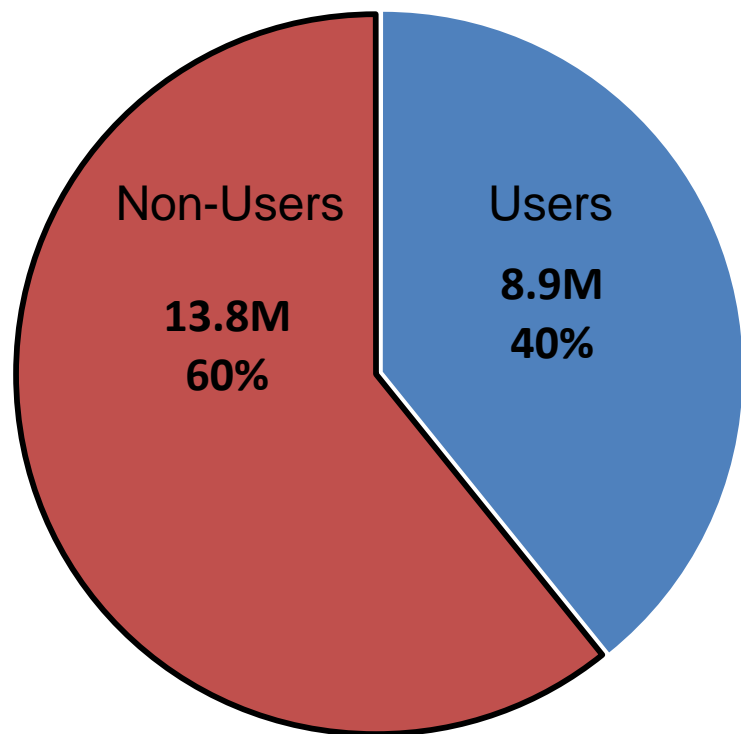
- Veterans' homelessness to zero by 2015
- Backlog of claims to zero by 2015
- Increase access



# Approximately 60% of Veterans do not currently access VA services and understand little to nothing about their benefits

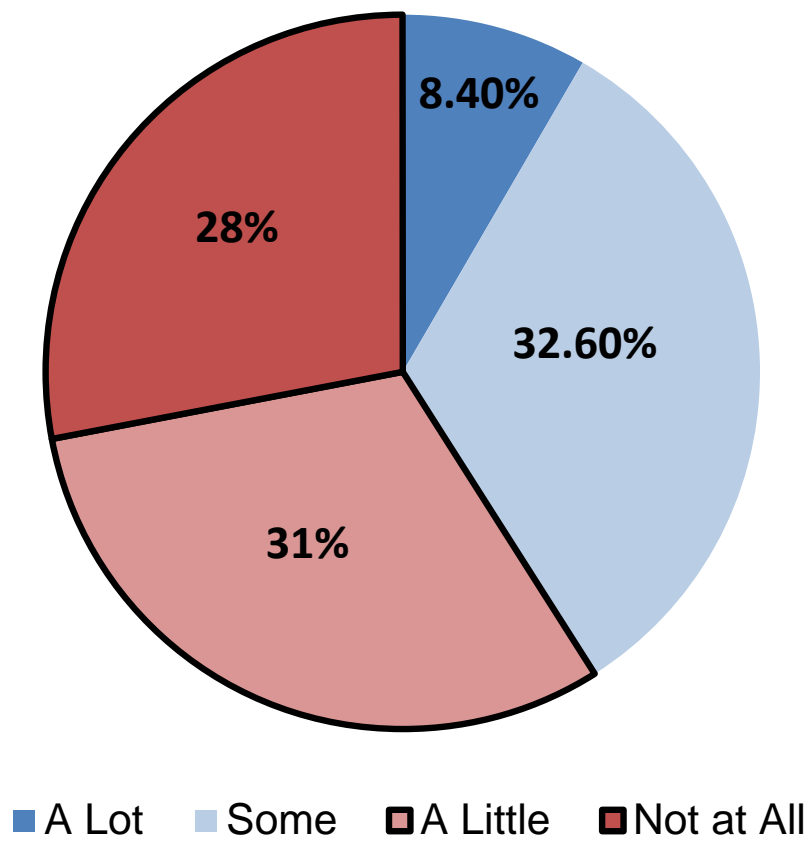
## Veteran Utilization of VA Benefits/Service

*% of overall veterans utilizing a VA benefit/service*



## Veteran Awareness of VA Benefits/Service

*Q: How much do you understand the VA benefits available?*



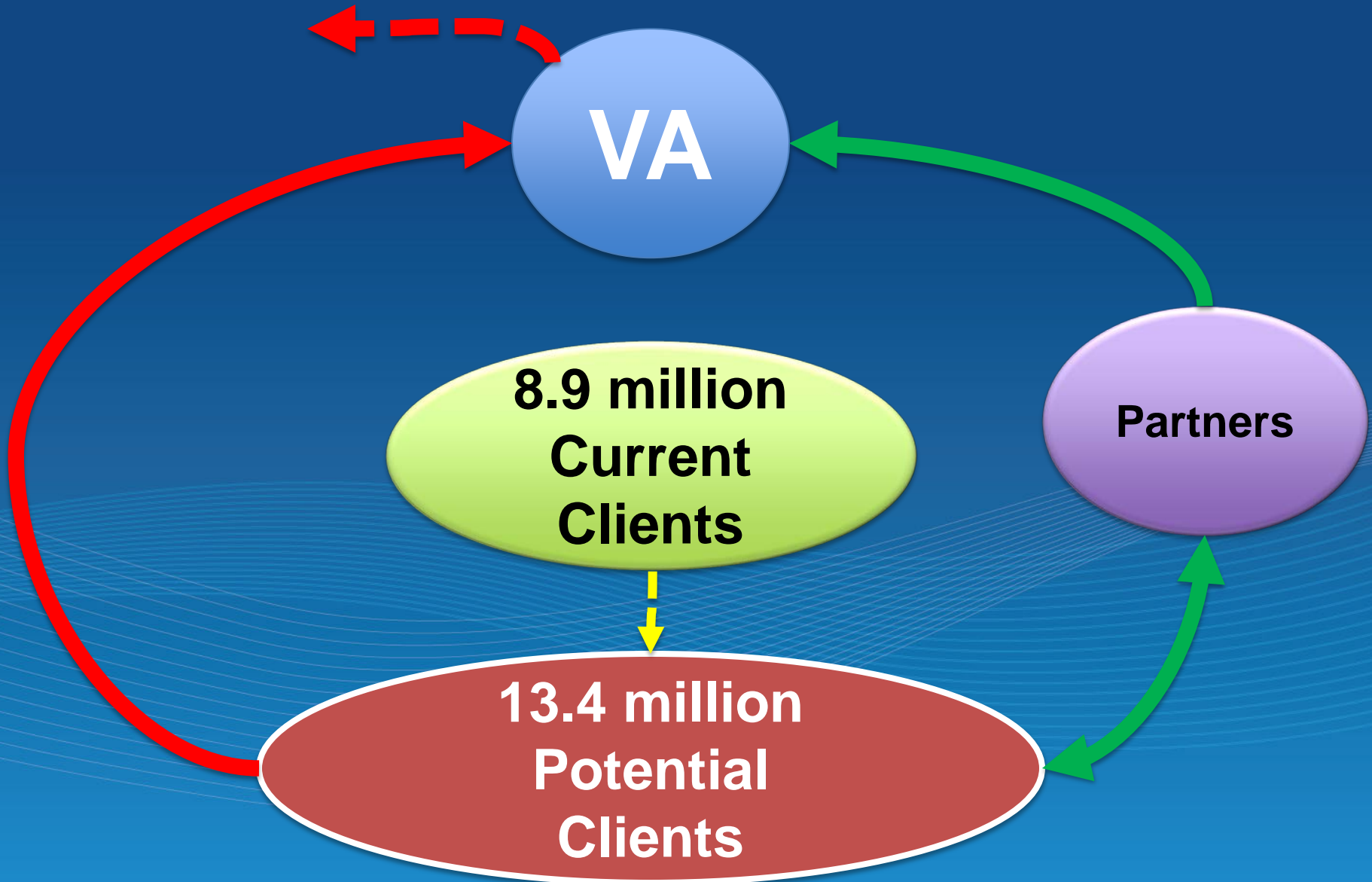
**Source:** Unique Veterans Utilization of VA Benefits and Services FY 2010, Office of Policy and Planning, National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics

**VA**



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

## *2014 communication model*







## Mission

# National Veterans Outreach

- Leads and coordinates outreach program activities and communications throughout the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- Promotes the integration and synchronization of outreach efforts to increase Veterans' awareness, confidence and access of VA's healthcare, benefits and services



## Specified Tasks

- **Prepare and deliver Congressionally mandated reports by required dates IAW U.S.C. 38, Chapter 63**
- **Provide proper contract management oversight to ensure legal and responsible execution of contracts**
- **Plan and execute the National Veterans Day Program and support to the National Memorial Day Program**
- **Manage the VA Advertising Oversight Board**
- **Manage and lead the weekly VA outreach integration Meeting (Tiger Team)**
- **Serve as lead planner and host for quarterly VSO/NGO Communication leads update at OPIA**
- **Plan, coordinate and execute required outreach training as part of OPIA training program**



## **We've partnered with the Ad Council for a campaign encouraging new Veterans/clients to apply for their benefits**

- **Objective**

- Increase awareness of the breadth of VA services and benefits that are available to Veterans, spouses and dependents, and motivate them to inquire about and apply for applicable benefits.

- **Target**

- Veterans: a diverse group of men & women from all generations
- Spouses / Families: Represent decision makers and may be entitled to services (English & Spanish language)
- Active duty military: future and current (VA Home loan) customers

- **Intent**

- True veterans
- True stories
- Emotion
- Compel action





# Well-Known Ad Council Public Service Advertising Campaigns:



**1950s:**

- Forest Fires,
- Polio



**1970s:**

- Peace Corps,
- Red Cross



**1990s:**

- Domestic Violence,
- Recycling, Child Abuse

**1960s:**

- Pollution,
- Discrimination



**1980s:**

- Crime, Drunk Driving, Seatbelts, AIDS



**2000s:**

- Autism Awareness, Mentoring, Obesity Prevention





### **DME Mission:**

- Share VA information, gain feedback & engage w/the public via social media

### **Leveraging DME:**

- Online amplification of content
- Online support for public, NGO questions
- Event coverage, amplification & participation
- NGO response to questions asked to VA



### **VA online:**

- **Facebook – 385,000 followers**
- **Twitter – 135,692 followers**
- **YouTube – 5,378 subscribers, 3M+ views**
- **Flickr – 6,000-7,000 daily photo views, 21,000+ photos**
- **VAntage Point Blog – 779 posts, 10K+ comments, 100,000+ visitors/month**



# Digital Media Engagement

## Website changes:

- Update to new format
- Launched Explore website
- Update to Explore (Explore 2.0) this spring





## Who We Are

**The VA Office of National Veterans Sports Programs and Special Events is responsible for increasing awareness and sustained participation in adaptive sports among disabled Veterans.**

**The Office achieves this goal by providing information and resources to Veterans, their support network and those in the adaptive sports community.**





## What is it?

- **Adaptive sports is a term used to describe sports for those with physical, cognitive (e.g., PTSD, TBI) or visual disabilities**
- **Most adaptive sports have been modified or adapted in some way, either by allowing special equipment to compete or through a modification of rules**

## Who benefits from adaptive sports participation?

- **Disabled Veterans of all ages will benefit from participating in adaptive sports**
- **Adaptive sports have been shown to improve health, well-being, confidence and professional goal attainment**
- **Families, friends and caregivers benefit since regular physical activity aids in the emotional and physical healing of disabled Veterans**



# VA Office of Tribal Government Relations

## **Mission:**

- **Facilitate positive intergovernmental communication between the VA and tribal governments.**

## **Key Data Points:**

- **There are 566 tribal governments, and over 200,000 American Indian/Alaska Native Veterans**
- **A big challenge is that tribes are in very rural areas which are hard to get too. Our office works with each tribe to ensure all eligible American Indian/Alaska Native Veterans are knowledgeable of VA benefits and services.**
- **There are a number of opportunities to engage with tribal leaders on issues affecting tribal Veterans. Entry point is the OTGR.**
- **NGOs and VSOs can help by connecting with State Director and Tribal Leaders and increase awareness of VA benefits and services.**



# Questions